MR. C. V. CHANDRASEKHARAN (*Ag. Director of Public Instruction*): The matter is still under investigation.

Free pass applications in the Forest Department.

61. *MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether stamp duty is levied for free pass applications in the Forest Department:

(*b*) if the answer to part (*a*) is in the negative, whether the Government are aware that in the Quilon Forest Division, the levy of stamp duty is being insisted upon by the Divisional Forest Officer there; and

(*c*) whether the Conservator of Forests has verified this fact?

MR. T. C. THOMMEN (*Secretary to Government*): (*a*) Stamp duty is levied on free pass applications only in such cases where the applicant for the pass happens to be merely the purchaser of the timber belonging to the registry-holder. But in all other cases where the applicant is the original registry-holder and when he applies for pass for removal of timber, etc., from his own holding, no stamp duty is levied.

(*b*) *Vide* answer to part (*a*).

(*c*) Since the Divisional Forest Officer himself has reported that stamp duty is levied in certain cases only in pursuance of G. O. No. 4399/F. & M. R./434 of 1919, dated the 6th November 1919, no verification of the fact is called for.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): May I know whether any distinction is made in the department in the various Forest Divisions in regard to levy of stamp duty for applications for free passes?

MR. T. C. THOMMEN (*Secretary to Government*): No distinction is made.

MR. E. V. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Pattanamtitta*): May I know whether the allegation contained in part (*b*) of the question was pointedly referred to the Conservator by the Government? That is, I want to know whether the Conservator was asked by Government whether it was a fact that there was levying of stamp duty by the D. F. O., Quilon.

MR. T. C. THOMMEN (*Secretary to Government*): It was not necessary to make any reference. In some cases, stamp duty is levied.

MR. E. V KRISHNA PILLAI (*Pattanamtitta*): Is the stamp duty levied in respect of applications for trees on registered holdings?

MR. T. C. THOMMEN (*Secretary to Government*): In the case of purchasers of timber from registered holders, stamp duty is realised.

Aruvikara trace.

62. *MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) the distance of the Aruvikara trace from Nedumangad town to Aruvikara Water Works construction; and

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(*b*) the approximate cost of converting the above trace into a road ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer*) : (*a*) $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles.

(*b*) About Rs. 8,800.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : May I know whether Government are aware that the Aruvikara trace is in a cartable condition now ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer*) : I will accept that statement from the member, Sir. I have not seen it.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : May I know from the Government why an amount of Rs. 8,800 is required to improve that trace which has got only an extent of two and three-fourths miles ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer*) : For building culverts.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : May I know how many culverts have to be constructed in that trace ?

MR G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer*) : A few pipe culverts and two masonry culverts and a bridge.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : May I know the approximate cost ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer*) : The rough estimate for converting the trace into a road is about Rs. 8,800. That does not include gravelling or metalling ; and as that road is close and parallel to the Vellanad road which is going to be connected up by the Water Works Division, the Government do not consider that it is of urgent importance.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : May I know whether Government are aware that the Public Works Department sometimes submits prohibitive estimates with regard to the improvement of roads, so that the roads may not be taken up by Government ?

PRESIDENT : I cannot allow that question. It is an assumption.

Onam Holidays.

63. ✻**MR. T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI** (*Tiruvalla III*) : Will the Government be pleased to state :

(*a*) whether, as the result of their consideration, they have come to any definite decision regarding the question of raising the number of public holidays in the State to ten in connection with the Onam Festival; and

(*b*) if so, the result of the same ?

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*) :

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Such holidays cannot be increased.

MR. T. P. VELAYUDHAN PILLAI (*Tiruvalla III*) : May I know from the Government the reasons for maintaining the view that such holidays cannot be increased ?

RAO SAHIB DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : There are already a sufficiently large number of holidays in the year and Government do not therefore think it necessary to increase the number any more.

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